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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [GG](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: FRIENDLY FIRE INCIDENT INVOLVING GEORGIAN AND US  
SOLDIER

Classified By: POLITICAL-MILITARY COUNSELOR FREDERIC W. MAERKLE

1.(C/REL GG) SUMMARY. This cable is to inform Department and Embassy Tbilisi that on June 26, a U.S Special Forces soldier (SFS) was shot by a coalition soldier from the Georgian contingent in Iraq. At present, the incident is being characterized as a friendly fire incident. The appropriate Georgian military leadership has been informed and close cooperation between the US and Georgian military is underway. As required by US military regulations, a standard investigation is being carried out. The Georgian soldier is still in Iraq. Pursuant to Iraqi law (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17) and MNF-I regulations, only Georgia, not Iraq or the US, has jurisdiction over the Georgian soldier. END SUMMARY.

2.(C/REL GG) Preliminary investigation indicates that on the night of June 26, a Georgian soldier manning an internal checkpoint at forward Operating Base Gabe in Iraq, allegedly shot a vehicle carrying a U.S. SFS after the latter was noncompliant with instructions given by the former and attempted to drive away. The U.S. SFS was wearing civilian clothing, driving a civilian vehicle and in the company of two Iraq nationals. Five shots were allegedly fired at the vehicle in an attempt to disable it, one of which penetrated the rear of the vehicle striking the U.S. SFS in the back exiting his chest. The SFS has been MEDEVAC'd to Landstuhl for treatment but the prognosis is not good. The episode is being treated by the US military as a friendly fire incident.

3. (C/REL GG) As required by US military regulations, an investigation is underway. The Georgian military has been informed of the incident and is working closely with

the US military authorities to support the investigation. The Georgian soldier remains in Iraq and given Iraqi law (CPA Order No. 17 which gives the sending Coalition state exclusive disciplinary jurisdiction over its forces) and MNF-I regulations, only Georgia has jurisdiction to take disciplinary action against the soldier, if it appears such action is warranted.

Khalilzad